

TITLE OF THE INVENTION

POINT OF PURCHASE DISPLAY CARTON

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

5 This application claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application No. 60/458,725, filed
March 28, 2003.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

10 The present invention relates to a point of purchase display carton constructed from a
corrugated board that is foldable from an initially flat state to an assembled state for use. More
particularly, the present invention relates to point of purchase display that is constructed from a
corrugated board structured and arranged such that when in its assembled state it is adapted to
receive and retain a clear plastic front panel so that the items displayed in the carton can be easily
viewed by the purchaser.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

15 Display structures, racks and cartons formed from corrugated board are widely used in
retail establishments for displaying merchandise. The corrugated boards used to form the display
structures, racks and cartons are typically die cut from corrugated board and are foldable from an
20 initially flat state to an assembled state for use.

 One particular corrugated board display carton commonly used in the art is what is
common known as a corrugated "PDQ" display carton. Display cartons of this type are adapted

to contain a plurality of “impulse” type items such as bottles of aspirin, candy, gum or the like. PDQ display cartons generally comprise, in their assembled state, a bottom wall, a pair of opposed side walls, a front wall and a rear wall. The top of the display carton is open and the front wall of the display carton is normally of a height that is considerably less than a height of the rear wall of the carton. In this manner, a customer can view the products contained within the display carton and access the products from the front of the display carton to thereby remove one of the plurality of products for purchase. Often, the wholesaler or manufacturer will ship the display carton to a retailer in its assembled state with the products preloaded in the carton. When the display carton is shipped in this manner a shrink fit piece of cellophane or the like is wrapped around the display carton to maintain the products securely in the carton during shipping. Once the display carton and products arrive at the retail establishment, the retailer can simply remove the cellophane and place the display carton on a shelf or the like for sale of the products. Often, at the retail establishment, the display cartons are placed on a specifically designed rack for holding a plurality of PDQ display cartons.

Display cartons of the type described above have a number of benefits. First, since the display cartons are constructed from corrugated board, they are inexpensive which enables the retailer to simply discard the display carton once all of the products contained in the display carton have been sold. Also, from the perspective of the manufacturer, the display cartons are inexpensive and durable thereby helping maintain manufacturing and shipping costs at a minimum. In addition, the display cartons may be shipped and displayed in the same carton thereby also minimizing costs.

Although known display cartons have numerous advantages, as discussed above, they do

have one major disadvantage. Specifically, since the these display cartons are normally constructed entirely from corrugated cardboard the front wall of the display is opaque which can obstruct the consumer's view of the products contained within the display carton. This disadvantage is particularly troublesome when the products contained within display carton do not have a height sufficient to extend significantly above the top edge of the front wall of the display carton, the front wall thereby preventing the consumer from easily viewing the product. This disadvantage is also particularly troublesome when the products are arranged in a stacked configuration in the display and a sufficient number of products have been sold such that the front wall blocks the consumer from viewing the remainder of the products in the display carton.

OBJECTS AND SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

In view of the forgoing it is an object of the present invention to provide and improved display carton that overcomes the shortcomings of the display cartons disclosed in the prior art.

It is another object of the present invention to provide a display carton that can be easily folded from an initially flat state to an assembled state for use.

It is a yet another object of the present invention to provide a display carton that is inexpensive to manufacture.

It is a further object of the present invention to provide a display carton that enables a consumer to easily view the products contained within the display carton at all times regardless of the height of the products contained within the display carton and/or the number of products remaining in the display carton.

In accordance with the above objectives, the display carton according to the present

invention includes a corrugated board assembly having an initial flat unassembled state and an assembled state, a clear front wall having an initial flat unassembled state and an assembled state, the corrugated board assembly being structured and arranged in its assembled state to receive and retain the clear front wall.

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BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

A more complete appreciation of the present invention and many of the attendant advantages thereof will be readily understood by reference to the following detailed description when taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, in which:

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FIG. 1 is an elevational view showing the corrugated board assembly in its initial flat unassembled state;

FIG. 2 is a perspective view of the display carton depicting corrugated board assembly is folded from its initial flat unassembled state to its assembled state;

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FIG. 3 is a perspective view of the clear plastic front panel in its initial flat state;

FIG. 4 is a perspective view of the display carton showing how the a clear plastic front panel is joined to the front of the corrugated board assembly; and

FIG. 5 is a perspective view of the display carton according to the present invention its final assembled state.

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DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

Referring now to the Figures 1-4 in which like reference characters designate identical or

corresponding parts throughout the several views, the display carton in accordance with the present invention is identified generally by the reference numeral 10. The display carton includes a corrugated board assembly 11 and a clear plastic front panel 76.

The corrugated board assembly 11 is foldable from an initially flat state shown in Fig. 1 to an assembled state shown in Fig. 4. In its assembled state, the corrugated board assembly 11 defines a rear wall A, opposed side walls B and C and a bottom wall D. The front portion of the corrugated board assembly 11 in its assembled state is open. The front portion of the corrugated board assembly 11, as will be described in greater detail below, is structured and arranged to receive and retain the plastic front panel 76 such that the clear plastic front panel 76 defines the front wall of the display carton 10.

Reference is now made to Fig. 1 which shows the corrugated board assembly 11 in its initially flat state. The corrugated board assembly 11 generally comprises a unitary corrugated board having a plurality of sections or portions separated from one another by a plurality of fold lines that facilitate the assembly of the display carton from the flat state shown in Fig. 1 to the assembled state shown in Fig. 4. The various sections and fold lines will now be identified with reference to Fig. 1.

Corrugated board assembly 11 includes a first back wall panel 12 and a second back wall panel 16 which are separated from one another by a top edge section 54 defined between fold lines 40a and 40b. The second back wall panel 16 defines rectangular shaped notches 52a and 52b.

Located adjacent to the second back wall panel 16 is a first top side wall panel 18a and a second top side wall panel 18b. The first and second top side wall panels 18a and 18b are each

separated from the second back wall panel 16 along respective cut lines 19 and 21.

Arranged adjacently to the first back wall panel 12 is a first side wall panel 14a and a second side wall panel 14b. A fold line 36 is defined between the first side wall panel 14a and the first back wall panel 12 and another fold line 38 is defined the second side wall panel 14b and the first back wall panel 12.

Interposed between the first side wall panel 14a and the first top side wall panel 18a is a first top sidewall edge section 60a defined between fold lines 56a and 56b. Interposed between the second side wall panel 14b and the second top side wall panel 18b is a second top sidewall edge section 60b defined between fold lines 58a and 58b.

A first slotted flap 26a is arranged adjacent to the first side wall panel 14a. Interposed between the first side wall panel 14a and the first slotted flap 26a is first sidewall edge section 70a defined between fold lines 64a and 64b. The first side edge section 70a also includes a first sidewall slit 68a. The first slotted flap 26a defines a first sidewall slot 72a. Arranged adjacent to the first slotted flap 26a is a first sidewall flap 28a, the first slotted flap 26a and first sidewall flap 28 being separated by a fold line 74a.

A second slotted flap 26b is arranged adjacent to the second side wall panel 14b. Interposed between the second side wall panel 14b and the second slotted flap 26b is second sidewall edge section 70b defined between crease lines 66a and 66b. The second side edge section 70b also includes a second sidewall slit 68b. The second slotted flap 26b defines a second sidewall slot 72b. Arranged adjacent to the second slotted flap 26b is a second sidewall flap 28b, the second slotted flap 26b and second sidewall flap 28b being separated by a fold line 74b.

Arranged adjacent to first back wall panel 12 is first bottom panel 20. A fold line 30 is defined between first back wall panel 12 and first bottom panel 20. Located adjacently on either side of first bottom panel 20 is a first and second bottom flap, 22a and 22b. Fold lines 32 and 34 are defined between first bottom flap 22a and the first bottom panel 20 and between second bottom flap 22b and the first bottom panel 20. A portion of first bottom flap 22a abuts the first sidewall panel 14a along a cut line 23 and a portion of the second bottom flap 22b abuts the second sidewall panel 14b along cut line 25.

A second bottom panel 24 is arranged adjacent to the first bottom panel 20. Interposed between the first bottom panel 20 and second bottom panel 24 is a front edge section 50. Fold lines 42a and 42b are defined between the front edge section 50 and the first bottom panel 20 and the front edge section 50 and the second bottom panel 24. Front edge section 50 defines slits 48a, 48b and 48c. Second bottom panel 24 defines locking slots 46a, 46b and 46c. The second bottom panel 24 also includes tabs 44a and 44b.

The structure of the clear plastic front panel 76 in its initial flat unassembled state will now be described with reference to Fig. 3. The clear plastic front panel 76 comprises a center portion 78. The center portion 78 includes a an inner surface 96 and an outer surface 98. The center portion 78 is connected to a first end locking tab 80a via crease line 84a and to a second end locking tab 80b via crease line 84b. The crease lines or living hinge, as they are referred to in the industry, allow the clear plastic front panel to be manually bent at room temperature. The first end locking tab 80a includes an end latch portion 86a and a substantially flat portion 90a. The second end locking tab 80b includes an end latch portion 86b and a substantially flat portion 90b. The a center portion 78 is also connected to center locking tabs 82a, 82b and 82c by crease

lines 88a, 88b and 88c respectively. Center locking tab 82a includes a center latch portion 94a and a substantially flat portion 92a. Center locking tab 82b includes a center latch portion 94b and a substantially flat portion 92b. Center locking tab 82c includes a center latch portion 94c and a substantially flat portion 92c. The clear plastic front panel 76 is preferably constructed from polyethylene terephthalate modified with cyclohexanedimethanol (PETG). The use of PETG is preferably since it may be manually bent along the crease lines at room temperature and does not require any heating of the clear plastic front panel 76 or an additional tool or device to bend the locking tabs. However, it is possible that the clear plastic front panel 76 could be constructed from other suitable clear materials. The PETG clear plastic front panel 76 is manufactured in its initial flat state by an injection molding process.

Referring now to Fig. 2, the assembly of the corrugated board assembly 11 from its flat initial state shown in Fig. 1 to its assembled state shown in Fig. 4 will now be described. The first bottom flap 22a and the second bottom flap 22b are each adapted to be folded inwardly along fold line 32 and along fold line 34 respectively. Next, the first backwall panel 12 is folded towards the an interior of the display carton 10 along fold line 30 to form a right angle with the first bottom panel 20.

Then the first sidewall panel 14a and the second sidewall panel 14b are folded towards the interior of the display carton 10 so as to form a right angles with the first backwall panel 12. The first sidewall panel 14a is folded up towards the interior of the display carton 10 along the fold line of 36 and the second sidewall panel 14b is folded up towards the interior along the fold line 38.

Then the first top sidewall panel 18a is folded over, along fold lines 56a and 56b, in

contact with the first sidewall panel 14a thereby forming a first top sidewall edge section 60a.

The first slotted flap 26a is then folded, along fold lines 64a and 64b, thereby forming a first

sidewall edge section 70a. Similarly, the second top sidewall panel 18b is folded over, along

fold lines 58a and 58b, thereby forming a second top sidewall edge section 60b. The second

5 slotted flap 26b is then folded, along lines 66a and 66b, thereby forming a second sidewall edge section 70b.

The first sidewall flap 28a is folded along fold line 74a to form a right angle with the first

slotted flap 26a and is folded to be in contact with the first bottom flap 22a. The second sidewall

flap 28b is folded along fold line 74b to form a right angle with the second slotted flap 26b and is

10 folded to be in contact with the second bottom flap 22b.

The second bottom panel 24 is then folded along fold lines 42a and 42b towards the

interior of the display carton 10 to be in contact with the first sidewall flap 28a and the second

sidewall flap 28b. The second bottom panel 24 secures the first sidewall flap 28a to the floor of

the display carton 10, thereby securing the first slotted flap 26a to the first top sidewall panel 18a,

15 which secures the first top sidewall panel 18a to the first sidewall panel 14a. Similarly, the

second bottom panel 24 secures the second sidewall flap 28b to the floor of the display carton 10,

thereby securing the second slotted flap 26b to the second top sidewall panel 18b, which secures

the second top sidewall panel 18b to the second sidewall panel 14b.

The second backwall panel 16 is then folded down to lock the second bottom panel 24 in

20 place. The rectangular-shaped notches 52a, 52b of the second backwall panel 16 engage the tabs

44a, 44b of the second bottom panel 24 to lock the both the second backwall panel 16 and the

second bottom panel 24 in place.

The assembly of the clear front plastic panel 76 from its flat initial state shown in Fig. 3 to its bent assembled state shown in Fig. 4 will now be described. The first end locking tab 80a is bent manually towards the inner surface 96 of the center portion 78, via crease line 84a so that the substantially flat portion thereof 90a is at a right angle with the inner surface 96 of the center portion 78 of the clear plastic front panel 76. The second end locking tab 80b is bent manually towards the inner surface 96 of the center portion 78, via crease line 84b so that the substantially flat portion thereof 90b is at a right angle with the inner surface 96 of the center portion 78 of the clear plastic front panel 76.

Similarly, each of the center locking tabs 82a, 82b and 82c is bent manually towards the inner surface 96 of the center portion 78, via crease lines 88a, 88b and 88c respectively, so that each of the substantially flat portions thereof 92a, 92b, 92c is at a right angle with the inner surface 96 of the center portion 78 of the clear plastic front panel 76.

After each of the corrugated board assembly 11 and the clear plastic front panel 76 are individually assembled in the manner described above, the clear plastic front panel 76 is inserted into the corrugated board assembly 11 as shown in Fig. 4 to thereby form the completed display carton 10 as shown in Fig. 5. The clear plastic front panel 76 is inserted into the corrugated board assembly 11 as follows. The first end locking tab 80a and the second end locking tab 80b are pushed through the first sidewall slit 68a and the second sidewall slit 68b, respectively. While also at the same time, the center locking tabs 82a, 82b and 82c are pushed through slits 48a, 48b, and 48c respectively. The latch portions of the locking tabs spread the various slits open until the locking tabs find relief in the slots. At this point the locking tabs are secured to the front end of the display carton.

The embodiment of the present invention described above overcomes the shortcomings and problems inherent in prior art point of purchase display cartons and provides additional advantages and benefits. Specifically, the present invention provides a display carton that includes a clear plastic front panel that enables a consumer to easily view the products, at all times, contained within the display carton, while at the same time allowing for the ease of shipping a vast number of unassembled display cartons. Both the corrugated panel and the clear plastic front panel are manufactured in a flat unassembled state thereby permitting stacking of both a plurality of corrugated panels and a plurality of clear plastic front panels during shipment. Once the display cartons are received from the manufacturer, the wholesaler may easily assemble each display carton so that it may be filled with product before shipment to the retailer.

Although exemplary embodiments of the present invention have been shown and described, it will be apparent to those having ordinary skill in the art that a number of changes, modifications or alterations may be made, none of which depart from the spirit of the present invention. All such changes, modifications or alterations should therefore be seen as within the scope of the present invention.